

Tips for Counselors of a Day Camper with Hearing Loss

Hearing aid and cochlear implant technologies do wonders, but there are still some accommodations needed to help campers with hearing loss achieve their full potential at camp.

**Center for
Hearing and
Communication**

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Understand/Get to Know Your Camper

Each camper will have personal preferences when it comes to maximizing hearing and ensuring optimal communication. We suggest a meeting with the camper to find some common ground where you can help be an advocate for him/her.

Facilitate Communication at Camp

- When you are addressing the group, background noise makes it difficult to hear, so try to choose a quiet spot.
- Speak naturally without exaggerated lip movements.
- Address the campers by name to help your camper with a hearing loss know you are speaking to and to follow the flow of the conversation.
- When you address the group make sure your camper with hearing loss is close enough to you to understand the instructions. Be sure that he/she understood the directions by asking follow-up questions to the group (i.e. "What are we doing first?"). It is also important that you do not single out camper by only asking them.
- Demonstrate the activity to help campers understand directions with a demonstration.
- Make sure the camper with hearing loss can see your face clearly before speaking. Avoid holding anything in front of your mouth or turning your back away from the group when talking.
- Repeat the questions asked by other campers to allow the camper another opportunity to hear the question by a more prominent voice.

Other Things You Can Do

- Inform other staff members about the camper's hearing loss and share strategies to help your camper be successful.
 - If you notice your camper with hearing loss asking "what" or needing more repetition than usual, check the camper's equipment/batteries as they may not be working properly. Make sure to notify the camper's parents/ caregiver if there is a problem.
 - Encourage your camper to explain their hearing loss to their friends. Allow them to answer questions if other campers ask what is on their ears.
 - Create a plan with your camper for water activities. The plan should include establishing a designated storage area near water activities and ensuring that your camper uses waterproof gear.
- Give directions before the camper takes out his/her listening device(s) and then use signals to instruct when swimming.

